

*The Reasonableness and Advantages of being
Religious betimes.*

141. A FUNERAL
S E R M O N

Occasion'd by the
D E A T H
O F

Mr. John Jeffery junior.

P R E A C H ' D

February 2. 1719. 20.

Publiſh'd at the

REQUEST of his Surviving
Relations.

By NATH. WYLES. *N*

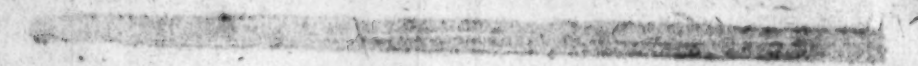
One dies in his full Strength, Job xxi. 23.

*Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not
what a Day may bring forth, Prov. xxvii. 1.*

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Religious better.



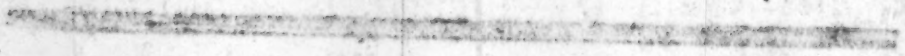
A FUNERAL
SERMON

W. Musgrave

Mr. John
PREBENDARY



REQUEST of the Surviving
Relations



By W. L. S.

One Edition of the Sermon
being now in the Press, and
will be ready in a few Days.



LONDON: Printed in the Year 1700.

(Price 4s.)

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The Dedication.

**To the Surviving Relations of
Mr. JOHN JEFFERY
deceased.**

THE many Civilities I have received from your Hands, have prevailed with me, upon your pressing Instances, to publish this Discourse, and also to dedicate it to you, as a Token of my real Respect.

The dear Deceased was sincerely and undisguisedly Religious and Vertuous while living; and so, tho your Loss be great, his Gain by Death is infinitely greater. His God and yours, who had the greatest right to him, has taken him from you. Your Duty is, to be still and know that he is God, Ps. 46. 10.

May this Stroke be sanctified to you all; and may you learn and diligently practise what such a trying Providence calls for from you.

The Dedication.

May the best of Blessings descend upon you and yours ; and may you all grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ our only Lord, and at last arrive in Glory, where he, as your Head and Forerunner, is long since for you entered ; is the ardent Prayer of

Your Brother

in our Common Lord,



NATH. WYLES.

L A M E N. iii. 27.

It is good for a Man that he bear the Yoke in his Youth.



W H E N I consider'd, how young our dear Friend and Brother was when Death overtook him; and also, that he did *bear the Yoke in his Youth*, or was religious betimes; this fix'd my Thoughts on the Words before us, as being a Subject very proper for me to preach from on this sad Occasion. When, where, or how we may die; whether in our Beds, or up; or whether at home, or, as this young Man did, abroad; or whether we shall have previous Notice given us of our Change by Sickness, or be cut off by a sudden Stroke from Heaven; are things which God has been pleas'd to keep as Secrets from us. And since we know neither the Place, nor Time, nor Manner of our leaving this World by Death, we should with the greatest Care and Diligence endeavour to get ready for it; so that when these earthly Houses of ours shall be dissolv'd by Death, we may have nothing to do but to submit to his Stroke, as the Messenger of God sent by him to fetch us home. 2 Cor. v. 1.

Now, what way can we get ready for this Change of Changes, but by bearing the Yoke of Christ, or being sincerely religious; and such of us as are young, by bearing it in our Youth, or being religious betimes?

That the Prophet *Jeremiah* was the Penman of this Book of the *Lamentations* I find is generally allow'd, but the Occasion of his Penning of it is not so generally agreed

greed to by Expositors. Some are of opinion, that he wrote it on the Occasion of the Death of good King *Josiah*, and those Miseries which befell the *Jews* from his Death, till the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and the time when the Princes and Nobles were slain, and the Kings, and Prophets, and Priests were carried Captives into *Babylon*. The Foundation of this their Opinion is that Passage in *2 Chron.* xxxv. 25. where you read, that *Jeremiah* lamented for *Josiah*, and all the singing Men and singing Women spake of *Josiah* in the Lamentations to this day, and made them an Ordinance in Israel; and behold they are written in the Book of the Lamentations: and also those Expressions you meet with in Chap. iv. 20. and Chap. v. 16. *The Breath of our Nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord, was taken in the Pits, and the Crown is fallen from our Heads: Wo unto us, that we have sinned.* But this Opinion (I find) is rejected by others, who say, that the Occasion of the Prophet's penning of this Book was not the Death of King *Josiah*, but only the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and this, not as if it was foretold, but as if it was actually fulfill'd, and come to pass. For this Opinion they assign two Reasons; as (1.) Because there is nothing in this Book that agrees to King *Josiah*, who was not carried into Captivity, but was buried with his Fathers at *Jerusalem*. And (2.) Because the whole Current of this Book of the *Lamentations* is evidently applicable to *Jerusalem's* Destruction, and the Miseries that befell the *Jews* thereupon: Of which (say they) it speaks historically as of a thing already done, and not prophetically, as of a thing to be done hereafter. Which of these two Opinions is most valid, is not very material for us now to enquire into. Whoever reads this Book with Care, cannot but observe, that the Prophet's great Design in it, is, after a very lively manner to paint out, and sadly to bewail the Miseries the *Jews* were now under for their Iniquities; and to call them to Repentance, Faith, and Prayer, that they might obtain God's Favour, and have it manifested to them in his pardoning of their Sins, and raising of them from that extream low Condition they were now put into by them. He endeavours to affect this People's Hearts with those Judgments which were

were come upon them for their great Abominations, and to promote their Repentance and Reformation, that so they might be deliver'd from their present Miseries, and enjoy the Love of God once again.

In the two Verses preceding the Text, you have Patience, Hope, and Prayer recommended as great and good Duties to be perform'd by them under their present Tryals. *The Lord (says the Prophet) is good to them that wait for him, and to the Soul that seeketh him: It is good that a Man should both hope, and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord:* And now follow the Words before us; which I shall take leave to accommodate to young Persons, as being suitable to the melancholy Occasion of our meeting here this Day.

It is good for a Man that he bear the Yoke in his Youth.

In speaking from these Words for your Profit (if God will) I shall

First, Shew you what we are here to understand by Yoke, which the Prophet says, *It is good for a Man to bear in his Youth.*

Secondly, What it is to bear this Yoke; or, what is imply'd in this Phrase of *bearing the Yoke.*

Thirdly, I shall shew you, How it is good for a Man, and that betimes, even in his Youth, to bear this Yoke.

And then Lastly, Shut up this Discourse by way of Exhortation and Advice to you all, but especially to Young ones.

First, I am to shew you, What we are here to understand by Yoke, which the Prophet says, *It is good for a Man to bear in his Youth.*

I need not tell you, that this is a Metaphor borrow'd from an Instrument call'd a Yoke, which Men make use of, either to tame, or to work, or to punish unruly, but useful Beasts withal. There are (I conceive) two Things which we may understand, as the Meaning of this Metaphor here us'd.

As 1st, The Word of God, or his Will reveal'd in his holy Word, and our Subjection and Obedience to it,

2^{dly},

2dly, The Rod of God, or those Tryals and Afflictions we are expos'd to, or may meet with in this World, either for or from him. This latter seems principally to be intended here; but the former may not be excluded; and therefore I shall briefly discourse of both of them.

1. then, By this Yoke we may understand the Will of God reveal'd in his holy Word, and our Subjection or Obedience to it; and 'tis good for a Man that he bear this Yoke in his Youth.

This we are call'd upon (by our glorious Redeemer) to take upon us, with a Promise annex'd to it, that *We shall find Rest to our Souls*, Matth. xi. 29. What is in other Places of Scripture call'd *The way of Righteousness, and of Holiness, and the Precepts of God, and the Commandments of Christ our High Priest and Lawgiver*, Prov. xii. 28. *Isaiah xxxv. 8. John xiv. 21.* is here (in the Text) styl'd a Yoke. And here I shall briefly shew you, why the Precepts of God, and the Commands of our Lord Jesus Christ bear this Character. And

1. They may be call'd a Yoke upon our account, who are to be obedient to them. We are so depraved and corrupted by Sin, that that which otherwise would have been no more than a Law to us, as easy as it was natural and necessary, binding and directing us to our Duty; is now become a Yoke, and a troublesome one too. To such Persons as are yet in a State, and live in a Course of Sin, it is a very heavy Yoke, a Yoke which they cannot bear. God's Law or Word is too holy, pure, and strict for them to observe, and be guided by. *St. Paul* tells us, *That the carnal Mind is Enmity against God*, Rom. viii. 7. *it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed as such can it be.* There is no Suitableness in unconverted Sinners to God's Word; and therefore (in the Precepts and Directions of it) it is to them a Yoke which they cannot bear, nor subject themselves to; it forbids and condemns all their Sins, and sensual Pleasures, (which they love as their Lives) and requires them to be sorry for, and repent of their Vices and Follies, to deny themselves, to mortify the Deeds of the Body, and to walk in Newness of Life; all which are hard Sayings to them, and things which they cannot bear, nor by any means submit to. For this Reason they cast God's Word behind

behind them; refuse and hate to be reform'd; and will not chuse the Fear of the Lord. That is the best Scheme in Religion with them, which allows of and countenances Sin, and gives Men leave to gratify their carnal and sensual Appetites; and because the Christian Religion forbids these things, and requires them to *deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, Tit. ii. 11, 12. therefore they look upon it as *Bands and Fetters, and as a burdensome Yoke*, Psal. ii. 3. which they kick against, and cast away from them. And because there are some Remains of Sin in the best of Christians, (for their Sanctification here is but imperfect) the Commands of their Redeemer and Lord are in some measure as a Yoke to them. So far indeed as Grace and Piety prevails in the Heart, the Yoke of Christ is *easy, and his Burden is light*; and his *Commandments are not grievous*, 1 John v. 3. There is in such Persons an inward Delight in the Law of God, and in doing of his Will; and it must be thus, *because his Law is written in their Hearts*, Psal. xl. 8. But because there is still a Body of Sin and Death hanging about them, this Yoke sometimes sits very uneasy upon them, and they find it difficult to perform their Duty. Sometimes there is only a Will left, and hardly that, to judge of the Goodness of their State for another World; for *how to perform they find not*, as St. Paul said of himself, Rom. vii. 18. He that is a sincere Christian would be *holy, as he that has called him is holy*: He would have a becoming Respect to all God's Commands, Psal. cxix. 6. and stand compleat in all the Will of his heavenly Father. But he finds something within that opposes and pulls him back; so *that when he would do good, Evil is present with him*, Rom. vii. 21. to hinder and molest him. This makes him walk heavily in the Ways of his God, and fills his Mouth with Complaints; as, *O! wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* Ver. 24. But,

2. The Precepts of God and Christ may be call'd a Yoke upon their own account, or with respect to their own Nature; and that first, Because they strictly require us to turn every one from his Iniquities, *to mor-*

tify our Members which are upon the Earth; and not make Provision for the Flesh, that we should fulfill it in the Lusts thereof, Rom. vi. 12. They require us to deny all Ungodliness, and to abstain from all Appearance of Evil, 1 Theff. v. 22. and that upon the Penalty of Eternal Damnation. They tell us, that if we thro the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, we shall live; but if we live after the Flesh, we shall die, Rom. viii. 13. And except we repent (they assure us) we must, and shall perish, Luk. xiii. 5. And then, 2dly, As they require us to mortify all Sin, and to watch and pray that we enter not into Temptation to commit it; so they also require us to press after Grace and Holiness, and to study and endeavour to grow therein, 2 Pet. iii. 18. As they require us to cleanse our selves from all Filthiness both of the Flesh and of the Spirit, so also to perfect Holiness in the Fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1. and to study and exercise Piety or Godliness throughout the whole Course of our Lives: To all these things we are oblig'd, and strictly tied by the Precepts of the Christian Religion; so that with respect to these Obligations upon us, to cease from doing of Evil, and to learn and practise that which is good, Isaiah i. 16, 17. they may be call'd a Yoke: And this Yoke, notwithstanding all this, we should all desire to come under, or be subject to; because 'tis good, and that betimes, to bear this Yoke; as you'll hear by and by. But

2dly, By Yoke here is also, and indeed principally, meant (as I said above) the Rod of God, or those Afflictions and Tryals we are expos'd to, and may meet with in this World for, and from him. These are call'd a Yoke. *I have (says God) broken the Bands of your Yoke, and made you go upright,* Levit. xxvi. 13. By this is meant their Deliverance from their great and sore Afflictions in Egypt, which is call'd, *Exod. xx. 2. The House of Bondage.* This heavy Yoke of Afflictions the Jews were now under, (when the Prophet wrote this Book) for they were carried away Captive into Babylon. This is call'd a Yoke, *Jer. xxvii. 12.* And God promis'd to break this Yoke from off their Necks, which now lay heavy upon them, *Jer. xxx. 8.* and according to the time he set to do it in, it was done for them. Now, Afflictions may be call'd a Yoke, because in their own Nature they are

are very troublesome and afflicting according to the Degree of them. They are *not jaious, but grievous* to Nature; not easy, but hard to be borne or endured, *Heb. xii. 11.* But notwithstanding this, it is good also for a Man, and that in his Youth, to bear this Yoke, as you shall hear presently. But thus much shall suffice to shew you what is here meant by Yoke, *viz.* the Word, and the Rod of God; but the latter chiefly. I shall now proceed

2dly, To shew you, What it is to bear this Yoke; or, what is the Meaning of this Phrase. And

1. Understanding this Yoke to intend God's Word, to bear it, signifies a ready, sincere, and chearful Subjection and Obedience to the holy and reasonable Precepts of it. This is call'd by our Saviour *a taking of his Yoke upon us*, *Matth. xi. 29.* By which is meant an Obedience and Conformity to the Precepts and Rules of his Holy Religion, both in Heart and Life. So that to bear this Yoke in one's Youth, is betimes to become religious; to cast off Sin and Vice, and to live and act as the Word of God directs. This elsewhere is call'd, *a seeking of Christ early*; and such he promises to love, and to be found of: *I love them that love me, and those who seek me early shall find me*, *Prov. iii. 17.* It is also call'd, *a remembring of God in the Days of our Youth*, *Eccles. xii. 1.* devoting our selves to his Fear and Service, and making the glorifying of his Name the governing Principle of our Lives and Actions. This in general is to bear the Yoke of God's Word in our Youth; to order our Lives and Actions by its Rules, and to be obedient to the Precepts of it from right Principles to a right End. But

2dly, As by this Yoke is meant Afflictions and Tryals, either for, or from God; so, to bear it may signify these two Things. As 1. A justifying of God as righteous in putting it at any time upon us, because we have sinned against him. And 2. A patient submitting to his Will for the taking of it off, both as to Manner and Time. This is our Duty; and *it is good* that we thus bear it. I don't look upon this Term *Bear* in the Text, only to signify God's laying the Rod upon us, or bringing us under this and the other Affliction, &c.

but also to be expressive of our Duty at such a time. Tho this Phrase signifies God's merciful and kind dealing with some in their Youth, humbling of them by the Rod, and bringing of them to themselves, and to himself; yet it may also signify Duty, viz. humbly to submit to God's Will under every Affliction, to justify him as righteous in all his Dealings with us here, and patiently to wait his time and pleasure for Deliverance from all our Troubles. But I shall not insist upon this now, but only treat (in its proper place) of the Good of suffering Affliction, and that in our Youth, when God shall please to exercise us thereby. I shall therefore proceed,

3dly, To shew you, How it is good for a Man, and that betimes, even in his Youth, to *bear the Yoke*.

And first, as this Yoke signifies God's Will reveal'd in his Word, so, *it is good to bear it in Youth*, may signify to us these two or three things. (1.) That to be religious, and that betimes, is what becomes us, and is our Duty. (2.) It is Profitable. And, (3.) It is Honourable. In all these respects it is good to *bear the Yoke* of God's Word in Youth, or to be religious betimes.

First then, it is good to bear this Yoke in our Youth; that is, it is our Duty so to do. God requires us in his Word, to be obedient to his Will, and the time for this is as much a Command, and so our Duty to observe, as the thing itself. He that calls us to bear, or take this Yoke upon us, is the Great God; and he doth not only require us to own and submit to his Authority, in desiring and endeavouring to be obedient to his Will; but he also commands us to do this betimes: as he hath revealed to us our Duty in his Word, so he hath fixed the time for the doing of it; and upon this account neither can be neglected without being guilty of great Sin. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth*, Eccles. 12. 1. is the Command of the Great God. In which Command you have the Time set, as well as the Duty itself required. He that calls upon us to love, fear, worship and honour him, (which is meant by remembring of him) hath stated the Time for the doing of it, and that is *in the days of our Youth*.

And

And since the Time is requir'd as well as the Duty itself, it is as much a Sin to let the time slip as to neglect the thing. I beseech you, young Ones, to consider, that it is not left to your Choice or Liberty, as to Time, when to be religious; for God, who hath requir'd this of you, hath set the Time, saying, *Remember me now in the days of your Youth*; and *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, Matth. 6. 33. *first* in Time, as well as *first* in Affection. He hath told you when you should begin to be religious, and that is in the Morning of your Days. You must now (while you are young) desire and study to know the Truth and Ways of God, and walk in them. The first part of your time he requires of you, and you cannot withhold it from him without despising his Authority; because (as was said above) this is as much commanded as the Duty itself. It is therefore good for a Man to bear the Yoke in his Youth, or to love and fear God early, because this is his Command who is exalted as Head above all.

But, 2dly, This is good, as it is, and will be profitable to us. St. Paul tells us, 1 Tim. 4. 8. that *Godliness is great Gain*; and is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come. God requires nothing of us but what is for our Profit and Advantage. He might (as one expresses it) by his Sovereignty have imposed what Commands he pleased upon us; but such is his Goodness and Love, that in what he requires he hath a regard to our Good: He is not, nor cannot be better'd thereby; for tho he that is good, may be, and is profitable to himself, yet he cannot be so to God, Job 22. 2, 3, 4. But tho we cannot advantage him by our Piety, yet he designs we shall be better'd thereby; and therefore it must be good for a Man to bear this Yoke in his Youth. Some have been so wicked as to say, That it is in vain to serve God, and *what Profit is it to us that we have kept his Commandments*? Mal. 3. 14. But such Persons were never truly religious, and so were strangers to the Profits of it. It may be said of Religion as it is, Prov. 3. 13, 14, 15. that *the Merckandise of it is better than the Merchandise of Silver, and the Gain thereof than*

than fine Gold. *It is more precious than Rubies, and all the things you can desire are not to be compared with it.* Whatever some thro Ignorance may think of Religion, as standing in the way of their Profit, and as being an Enemy to their present Advantage; I must tell you, that there is nothing tends so much to our Profit and Advantage, even here, as Religion does: It sanctifies every Condition to us, and is of great service in every Circumstance of Life: It teaches and directs such as are rich, *not to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who gives them all things freely to enjoy,* 1 Tim. 6. 17. It makes outward Prosperity to promote and help forward the eternal Welfare of our Souls, by applying what we enjoy here to serve the Honour of God, and the Wants of others, as well as our own. 'Tis Religion that teaches such as are rich to abound in good Works, and to act like Christians in such a State; and such as are poor, and in a mean state, but are sincerely religious, receive also great Profit thereby; for it teaches them to be *contented with such things as they have,* 1 Tim. 6. 6. as being the Will of their heavenly Father, and to *set their Hearts upon the things which are above,* Col. 3. 1, 2. where Christ their Redeemer and Lord is; which are of the highest Concernment to their Souls. In a word, Religion brings that Peace and Joy to the Soul which nothing else can do. The Precepts of it sincerely and constantly obey'd, are *the rejoicing of the Heart,* Psal. 19. 8. the Promises of it believed and meditated upon, *fill the Soul with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory,* Rom. 15. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 8. The Joy that arises from other things, is weak and unfruitful, *and the end thereof is Heaviness,* Prov. 14. 13. It is in its nature sensual and earthly, and at best it is but short-liv'd; for *the triumphing of the Wicked is short, and the joy of the Hypocrite is but for a moment,* Job 20. 5. But the Joy Religion brings is spiritual and heavenly, and it will endure for ever. It is the Strength of a Christian here in running of his Christian Race, and it is the Beginning and Pledge of that eternal Joy which he is to enter into with Christ in Heaven. Thus Religion is and will be profitable to us both here and hereafter; and so

it is good that a Man bear this Yoke in his Youth.
 But, 2dly, As this is profitable, so it is honourable. By
Humility and the Fear of the Lord (the wise Man tells us)
 are *Riches, Honour, and Life*, Prov. 22. 4. Upon this
 account good Men are call'd *Vessels of Honour*, 1 Thess.
 4. 4. 'Tis Man's greatest Honour to be truly Religious
 here; for by this means he is made to resemble God in
 Holiness, which is his Glory. Sin is his Deformity,
 and so his Shame, for it blots out the Image of God in
 Man, the azure Brightness of his Soul, and so robs him
 of his own Honour. Sin is a *Reproach to any Person*,
 Prov. 14. 32. but Religion doth and will brightly ho-
 nour him that embraceth it: it brings him to and pos-
 sesses him of the truest and best Honour. Such Persons
 as are sincerely religious, are call'd the *Excellent* or *Ma-
 gificent in the Earth*, Psal. 16. 3. and God himself calls
 them his *Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. which (you know) are
 rare and excellent things. There needs nothing else
 to make a Man truly honourable, than Religion in the
 Purity and Power of it: and indeed nothing else can
 do it, but this. True Honour begins in Religion, and
 is encreased and maintained by it. A true Christian
 (says one) has two Crowns, the one present, and the
 other future. His present Crown is Godliness and Sin-
 cerity in Religion; his future Crown is Glory, which
 is reserv'd in Heaven for him. This recommends the
 Yoke of Christ, and should persuade you who are
 young, as well as others, to take it upon you, and
 bear it in your Youth. Religion is a princely thing,
 it will bring you to Honour. When you shall em-
 brace it, it will give to your Heads an Ornament of Grace,
 and a Crown of Glory it shall deliver to you, Prov. 4. 8, 9.
 They are no better than Fools who neglect and de-
 spise Religion, for they know not what true Honour
 is, nor the way to it. What they reckon their Ho-
 nour, is their *Shame*, Phil. 3. 19. and (unless rich Grace
 prevents) it will be their utter Ruin, Jam. 1. 15. Can
 that be an Honour to a Man which defiles his Con-
 science, separates him from God, (the only Happiness
 of rational Nature,) and will (if continu'd in) damn his
 Soul

than fine Gold. *It is more precious than Rubies, and all the things you can desire are not to be compared with it.* Whatever some thro Ignorance may think of Religion, as standing in the way of their Profit, and as being an Enemy to their present Advantage; I must tell you, that there is nothing tends so much to our Profit and Advantage, even here, as Religion does: It sanctifies every Condition to us, and is of great service in every Circumstance of Life: It teaches and directs such as are rich, *not to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who gives them all things freely to enjoy,* 1 Tim. 6. 17. It makes outward Prosperity to promote and help forward the eternal Welfare of our Souls, by applying what we enjoy here to serve the Honour of God, and the Wants of others, as well as our own. 'Tis Religion that teaches such as are rich to abound in good Works, and to act like Christians in such a State; and such as are poor, and in a mean state, but are sincerely religious, receive also great Profit thereby; for it teaches them to be *contented with such things as they have,* 1 Tim. 6. 6. as being the Will of their heavenly Father, and to *set their Hearts upon the things which are above,* Col. 3. 1, 2. where Christ their Redeemer and Lord is; which are of the highest Concernment to their Souls. In a word, Religion brings that Peace and Joy to the Soul which nothing else can do. The Precepts of it sincerely and constantly obey'd, are *the rejoicing of the Heart,* Psal. 19. 8. the Promises of it believed and meditated upon, *fill the Soul with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory,* Rom. 15. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 8. The Joy that arises from other things, is weak and unfruitful, *and the end thereof is Heaviness,* Prov. 14. 13. It is in its nature sensual and earthly, and at best it is but short-liv'd; for *the triumphing of the Wicked is short, and the joy of the Hypocrite is but for a moment,* Job 20. 5. But the Joy Religion brings is spiritual and heavenly, and it will endure for ever. It is the Strength of a Christian here in running of his Christian Race, and it is the Beginning and Pledge of that eternal Joy which he is to enter into with Christ in Heaven. Thus Religion is and will be profitable to us both here and hereafter; and so

it is good that a Man bear this Yoke in his Youth.
But,

3dly, As this is profitable, so it is honourable. By *Humility and the Fear of the Lord* (the wise Man tells us) are *Riches, Honour, and Life*, Prov. 22. 4. Upon this account good Men are call'd *Vessels of Honour*, 1 Thess. 4. 4. 'Tis Man's greatest Honour to be truly Religious here; for by this means he is made to resemble God in Holiness, which is his Glory. Sin is his Deformity, and so his Shame, for it blots out the Image of God in Man, the azure Brightness of his Soul, and so robs him of his own Honour. Sin is a *Reproach to any Person*, Prov. 14. 32. but Religion doth and will brightly honour him that embraceth it; it brings him to and possesses him of the truest and best Honour. Such Persons as are sincerely religious, are call'd the *Excellent* or *Magnificent in the Earth*, Psal. 16. 3. and God himself calls them his *Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. which (you know) are rare and excellent things. There needs nothing else to make a Man truly honourable, than Religion in the Purity and Power of it: and indeed nothing else can do it, but this. True Honour begins in Religion, and is encreased and maintained by it. A true Christian (says one) has two Crowns, the one present, and the other future. His present Crown is Godliness and Sincerity in Religion; his future Crown is Glory, which is reserv'd in Heaven for him. This recommends the Yoke of Christ, and should persuade you who are young, as well as others, to take it upon you, and bear it in your Youth. Religion is a princely thing, it will bring you to Honour. When you shall embrace it, it will give to your Heads an Ornament of Grace, and a Crown of Glory it shall deliver to you, Prov. 4. 8, 9. They are no better than Fools who neglect and despise Religion, for they know not what true Honour is, nor the way to it. What they reckon their Honour, is their Shame, Phil. 3. 19. and (unless rich Grace prevents) it will be their utter Ruin, Jam. 1. 15. Can that be an Honour to a Man which defiles his Conscience, separates him from God, (the only Happiness of rational Nature,) and will (if continu'd in) damn his Soul

Soul at last? This Sin does, and will 'do, where 'tis allow'd of, and liv'd in: but he that is religious shall be honour'd by God himself. *If any Man serve me, him will my Father honour*, John 12. 26. And Christ, his Head and Lord, at last will put great Honour upon him: when the wicked shall be cast out with Shame and everlasting Contempt from the Presence of God, with a *Go, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire*; then such as have been truly religious, shall be honour'd by their glorious Redeemer with a *Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World*, Matth. 25. 34. Thus shall the Man be honour'd who *bears the Yoke in his Youth*, or is religious betimes. And therefore upon this account it is good so to do, or to be. But thus much shall suffice to shew you in what respects it is good to bear the Yoke of a ready, and chearful, and constant Obedience to the Commands of God, and our great and glorious Redeemer. Several other things might have been mention'd here to advantage; but not to be tedious, I shall proceed,

In the second place, briefly to shew you, How it is good for a Man to *bear the Yoke of Affliction in his Youth*.

This is a Paradox to the most of Men, and there are but few in the World that will grant it is good to be afflicted; yea the People of God themselves find it very difficult to subscribe to the truth of this, till the Affliction is over.

To set this therefore in a clear light, I must desire you to observe, That Afflictions are not good in themselves, they being the Fruit of Sin, and part of the Curse brought upon Man by the Breach of a Law that is holy, just, and good: they are evil in their own nature, and they are evil also in their tendency: but as they are order'd and directed by a wise and gracious God, so they are good, and they serve to good Purposes, and work to good Ends. By this means some have been converted from the Error of their ways; as *Mannasseh, who caused Israel to Sin, and filled the Streets of Jerusalem with Blood, &c. He was bound with Fetters, and carried to Babylon: and when he was in Affliction,*

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he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and he was entreated of him, and heard his Supplications, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. The Prodigal Son also was converted this way: When he was pinch'd with Hunger, he came to himself; return'd to his right Mind, and resolv'd to arise and go to his Father's House, where there was Bread enough and to spare, Luk. xv. 17, 18, 19. God by the Rod has taught many, and open'd their Ears to Discipline; and so way has been made for his holy Word, to their effectual Conversion to himself. In this respect it is good, that is, it is profitable for young Men to bear this Yoke in their Youth; and O! what a Mercy is it to have the Rod thus sanctified, as to learn Righteousness thereby, and to be purged from Sin, and made a Partaker of God's Holiness! *Hebr. xii. 10, 11.* This is what we should all desire, that by Affliction Sin may be cured and purged, and Holiness promoted both in our Hearts and Lives. It is not indeed pleasant to bear this Yoke, *For no Afflictions is joyous, but grievous:* But it is profitable, and that both to good and bad Men; to bad Men, to make them good; and to good Men, to make them better, to purge away their Drofs, and exercise and improve their Graces. Thus Afflictions are good both to Sinners and Saints; to the former, for their Conviction and Conversion to God; and to the latter, for their Improvement in Grace and Holiness. In this Sense it is good for every Man to bear this Yoke even in his Youth; for what can be of greater Profit and Advantage to them? *It is good for me (says David, Psal. cxix. 67.) that I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have learn'd to keep his Statutes:* and 'tis good (says he again, *Ver. 71.*) for me that I have been afflicted; that is, it is very much for my Profit and Advantage; for by this means I am reclaim'd from my former Wandrings, and become better instructed to know God's Statutes. So here (in the Text before us) *it is good for a Man to bear the Yoke in his Youth, i.e. 'tis for his Profit and great Advantage (thro God's Blessing) to be sometimes under Afflictions, by which his Heart betimes is humbled to the*

Will of God, and a Conformity to him in Holiness is promoted both in his Heart and Life. Such Persons will have cause to bless God thro the endless Ages of Eternity, who have had their Afflictions sanctified by him to these great and good Purposes. It may well be said, *Happy is the Man whom God corrects*, Job v. 17. since by this means his Sins are purged away, and he is made (as was said above) a Partaker of his Holiness. But this Term *Good* also signifies Duty, (as I hinted before) and so it intimates to us, that 'tis honourable, and what becomes us (even such of us as are young) quietly and patiently to bear what Afflictions God is pleas'd to lay upon us, to restrain our wanton Spirits, and to bring us to the Knowledge and Obedience of his Will. So that in short, you have here recommended to you the Duty of Persons under Affliction, who would obtain Mercy at the Hand of God; and their admirable Character, who are prepar'd for it under the Rod, they hope and quietly wait for God's Salvation, *Ver. 26*. They bear the Rod, because 'tis he that hath laid it upon them; they sit alone, and keep Silence, because he hath borne it upon them, *Ver. 28*. And they put their Mouths in the Dust, *Ver. 29*. if so be there may be hope; that is, they humble themselves, and submit to the Will of God, and quietly hope for, and expect his merciful and kind Appearance for them. In this Sense also it is good to bear this Yoke, and that in Youth; because 'tis honourable, and what becomes us, and is our Duty.

Thus I have as briefly as I could, consider'd the several Heads propos'd. I shall now

Lastly, Apply what has been said; and this I shall do by way of Exhortation and Advice to you all, but especially to young Persons. And

1st, With respect to the Yoke of Afflictions: There are two Things I would briefly exhort and advise you to. As,

1. Have any of you found it good, that is profitable and advantageous to you, to bear this Yoke, and that in your Youth? Be then thankful to God for so great a Mercy. 'Tis he that teaches to profit by the

the Rod, as well as by the Word; and therefore he must have the Praise and Glory of all the Good which you have receiv'd thereby. He is said to open *their Ears to Discipline*, Job viii. 10. who are held in the Cords of Affliction; and hath he in his Love done this for any of you? Hath he tam'd by this means your proud and wanton Spirits, made you sensible of your Sin and Misery by Nature and Practice, and inclin'd your Hearts to fear, love, and serve him? O! give unto him the Glory due unto his Name for so great a Favour. You might have been harden'd by the Tryals you have met with; as 'tis said of King *Abaz*, and is true of many Thousands besides him, that *he transgressed yet the more against the Lord*, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. But God hath open'd your Ears to Discipline, and sanctified your Afflictions for the Good of your Souls. He hath afflicted you for your Profit, to make you Partakers of his Holiness; so that now you can say, it is good for you that you have been afflicted. O! let this happy Experience stir up your Souls, and all that is within you, to bless his holy Name. But,

2. Let me exhort you patiently to bear God's Rod when it is laid upon you, and quietly to wait for his Salvation. In this Sense (you have heard) it is good to bear the Yoke, and that in Youth. This is your duty, and what becomes you; and indeed, when you consider what you have deserv'd at God's Hand, even eternal Destruction, you'll see great Reason to be patient, and submissive to him under the Rod here, and to admire his Patience and Goodness, that you are still out of Hell. You all by Sin deserve eternal Damnation; and *shall a living Man complain*, Lam. iii. 39. who is yet out of Hell; and not be patient and quiet, when what he now suffers is not only what he deserves by Sin, but 'tis far less than his Iniquities deserve? I beseech you to consider this, and beg of God this Temper of Mind, quietly to submit to his Will under the Yoke of Affliction, when-ever he shall please to put it upon you, and also to sanctify it to you every way for the Profit of your Souls. But,

3dly, With respect to the Yoke of Obedience, and objection to the Precepts of God, and the Commands of

our Lord Jesus Christ, I would exhort and advise you to these following things. And,

1st, Examine whether you have as yet taken this Yoke upon you: Is it good for a Man to *bear this Yoke*, and that *in his Youth*? then the question is, What Yoke are you under? Are you under that of Sin and Satan, or under that of Christ? And is it profitable and honourable to be his Subjects, and under his Princely Government? then enquire diligently how it is with you; and I entreat you to be serious and in good earnest in this matter, which highly concerns your Souls. To be deceived here, is a thing of dangerous Consequence. Be willing therefore to come to the Touchstone in this business, that you may not be mistaken, and go down to Hell with a Lye in your Right-Hand. Now if you ask, how you may know whether you are under this Yoke; I answer, you may know it two ways.

(1.) By your dying to Sin. And,

(2.) By your living to God.

Both these are the natural and proper Effects of true Subjection to Christ; and by them you may make judgment of your selves, how it is at present with you.

(1.) Then, you may know this by your dying to Sin. Where this Yoke is once put on, the Yoke of Sin daily putting off. Such Persons are now out of love with Sin, as that which is hateful to God, as well as injurious to themselves. They now confess their Sin to God with a broken Heart and contrite Spirit, and watch and pray against it, as that which is an Abomination to him. They pray against it as *David* did *Order my Steps in thy Word, and let not any Iniquity have dominion over me*, Psal. 119. 133. Sin is the greatest Trouble and Burden in the World; and there is nothing they more heartily wish for, than to be free from all Sin. The love they have to God and Christ causes them to hate Sin; and the stronger this Grace is, the greater is their hatred to it: and from this Principle they desire and endeavour to mortify it, and cast it off. They now would do nothing to offend their God more, but desire to be kept from every Iniquity.

quity. This is the genuine Effect of coming under Christ's Yoke, viz. to hate all Sin, and die daily to it; and by this you may make a judgment of yourselves as to this matter. Well then, what can you say to this? Do you hate all that you know to be Sin, mourn under the sense of it as an heavy Burden, and pray against it, as that which is an Abomination to the Lord? Do you watch and strive against it, and use those Means which God hath appointed in his Word to keep you from it? Is the Bent and Resolution of your Souls against it? and have you resolv'd (thro the Help of God) that you will never be at peace with Sin, nor live to the Lusts of the Flesh any more, as you have done? If it be thus with you, then you are under the Yoke of Christ, and so are in a happy Condition. But,

(2.) You may know this also by your living to God, and making it your greatest Care to advance his Glory in the World. Where this Yoke is put on, it is the Desire and Business of such Persons to live to God, and honour him. *They delight to do his Will, because his Law is written in their Hearts*, Psal. 40. 8. The Principle of Grace within, makes Obedience to Christ a delight; and this Delight and Joy in Obedience to him proves the truth of this Principle. There are many profess Subjection to Christ in Word, but they deny it in their Works: they call him Lord, Lord, but do not the things which he says, Luke 6. 46. But it is not thus where the Yoke of Christ is put on in truth; they desire and endeavour to live to him, and do his Will. *For me (says St. Paul) to live is Christ*, Phil. 1. 21. Holiness is the Business of the Spiritual Life in us, and Obedience is the Operation of this Life, according to the degree of it; and by this you may know whether you are come under Christ's Yoke, or not. Well then, what can you say to this also? Do you now live unto God? Is it your Desire and Care to do what you know to be his Will? and is it your delight so to do? Would you serve and obey God better, and bring more Glory to his great Name? And is it your Trouble that you cannot? Holiness is the conformity of our Minds to the Nature of God, and Obedience is
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our conformity to his Will reveal'd in his Word : and if your Obedience be free, sincere, and constant, from right Principles to a right End, 'tis a certain Sign of Grace and Piety in the Heart, and so of your being under Christ's Yoke. But,

2dly, Such of you as are under this Yoke, let me call upon you to be thankful for that Grace which hath brought you under it. I doubt not but here are many, both old and young, who are truly religious. I beseech you to call to mind how you came to be so, and be thankful. Time was when you were Servants of Sin, and other Lords had dominion over you. You were Slaves to your Lusts, and led Captive by Satan at his pleasure : but now 'tis otherwise with you. Remember *this is the Lord's doing, and it should be marvellous in your Eyes.* O! bless the Lord, who has persuaded and overpower'd your Hearts by his Grace to close with Christ, and come under his Government ; and study to *walk worthy of him unto all well-pleasing, Col. 1. 10.* 'Twas he that made you willing in the Day of his Power to leave your Sins, and to seek after him, and worship him in the Beauty of Holiness. Think of this, you young Ones, as well as others who are converted ; and let that God be praised by you who hath call'd you out of the World, and by the early Seeds of Grace and Holiness, is preparing you for a Harvest of Blessings here, and a glorious Reward in the next World. But,

3dly, Is it good for a Man to *bear this Yoke*, and that *in his Youth* ; then let me exhort and advise you (who may not yet be under it) to take it uponyou. I should be glad there were none here but what were under it ; but is there not reason to fear there are some who are strangers to it ? Suffer me to advise you, and prevail with you this Day, to come under Christ's Yoke. This is no other than the Call of Christ in his Word, and I hope you will not turn a deaf Ear to him. He says to you, *Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me, Mat. 11. 29.* this is his Advice and Counsel, *who came to seek and to save such as were lost*, as you are by Sin. O! hearken to his sweet Voice this Day, and harden not your Hearts, and *ye shall find rest*

to your Souls. Now to persuade you to this, besides what I but now said, I desire you to consider these four Things.

1. That 'tis but reasonable you should fear, and love, and worship, and honour the great God, by whom you live and move, and have your Beings: You are not your own, but his, for 'tis he that hath made you: And all the Mercies you have had, and do now enjoy, are from him. And since it is thus, is it not reasonable (think ye) that he should have Homage and Service from you, and that you should devote your selves to his Fear and Honour? St. Paul exhorting the Romans (as I am you this day) to *present their Bodies and Souls a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God*; he adds, *this is your reasonable Service*, Rom. xii. 1. What God has requir'd of you, is not unsuitable to your Reason; and you are under the highest Obligations to perform it. He is your Creator, and the Giver of all your Mercies; and he hath (which you should seriously think on) sent his only begotten Son to die for such Sinners as you are; all which make it highly reasonable, and so should prevail with you to take his Yoke upon you. But,

2. Consider that this will be every way for your Advantage. *It is good* (says the Prophet in the Text) that is, it is profitable and advantageous for a Man to bear the Yoke in his Youth. If you are poor and ignoble, this will enrich you, and raise you to the highest and best Honour; and if you have few or no Friends, God and Christ will be your Friends, who are the best of Friends. And moreover, by this you'll prove your Relation to Christ as his Brethren and Sisters: For he tells you, that *he that doeth the Will of his Father, the same is his Brother, Sister, and Mother*, Matth. xii. 49, 50. By this also you'll be qualified for Glory at last, and be possessed of it; for Christ is the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him, Hebr. v. 9. Think frequently on these Things; and O! that they might prevail with you to come under Christ's Yoke. But,

3. Consider

3. Consider that 'tis beautiful and comely for you to bear Christ's Yoke in your Youth. The wise Man tells us, that *every thing is beautiful in its Season*, Eccles. iii. 11. And O! what a comely Thing is it to see young ones coming to the Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to his Government! O! remember, young ones, that 'tis for your great Honour to be religious betimes. Sin is your Reproach and Shame; but by *Humility and the Fear of the Lord*, are both Honour and Life, as was said above. 'Tis recorded in the Holy Scriptures, for *Josiah, Samuel, Obadiah, and Timothy's* Honour, that they were religious betimes, fearing the Lord from their Youth upwards. Let this be your Desire and Care, and God himself will honour you. But,

4. Consider that you must come under this Yoke, or perish for ever: If you are not religious here, you must be for ever miserable hereafter. He *that lives after the Flesh*, you read, *shall die*, Rom. viii. 13. And without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord, Hebr. xii. 14. This, remember, is the standing Law of Heaven, that you must leave your Sins, or die; repent and turn to God, or perish for ever. Christ will come at last to take Vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not his Gospel: And what will you do then, if you are found Enemies to him, and his Religion? Can your Hearts endure, and your Hands be made strong in that Day, when he shall deal with you? If not, then be wise, and flee from the Wrath to come. And to this end, remember that there is but one Way to do this, and that is by closing in with Christ, and giving up your selves to an entire Subjection to his holy and pure Religion reveal'd in his Word. Consider these Things, and let them quicken you to seek after this Lord of Life, and make you all willing to become his Servants and Subjects. And here I would leave with you two Things by way of Direction.

And (1.) See that your Subjection to Christ be hearty: He requires it, and remember he deserves it. O! be sincere and entire in your Subjection to him, who was hearty in shedding of his Blood for such as you are. Any thing short of this, is only to

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old an outward Profession, or to name the Name of Christ, without departing from Iniquity; 'tis to have a Name to live, and yet be dead, and only to have a *form of Godliness without the Power of it*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. O! take care of this; and pray that your Hearts may be right in this Business, that you may not be ashamed, nor deceiv'd at last. But,

2dly, Do this soon without Delay, consider that you can't long to abide in this World; and when, or how God may call you, out of it, you know not: You see Death is no Respector of Persons; the Young die as well as the Old. And the Text tells you, that 'tis good to bear this Yoke in Youth: make no Delay then, (as our Saviour said in another Case) *what you do, do quickly*. This is a Work that requires haste, because 'tis a Business of Life and Death; and besides, your Time here is short and uncertain; therefore you ought to mind your Work to day, that it is more than probable will not be done to-morrow. God himself gives this Advice, *not to boast our selves of to-morrow, for we know not what a Day may bring forth*, Prov. xxvii. And we have daily Warnings given us by the Deaths of others, to prepare for our own Change: We see Death conquers all Ranks and Degrees, and Ages of men; and since we have no Certainty of tarrying long here, we should therefore make haste, and (with good David, who had consider'd his Ways) *make no Delay, keep the Commandments of our God*, Psal. cxix. 59.

Many, who have promised themselves long Life here, have been deceiv'd, for Death hath surpriz'd them; and we know not how it may be with us: And since we all desire and hope to be saved at last, we should now give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, and work out our Salvation with fear and Trembling. I beseech you think on this seriously, and let not the great Concerns of your Souls be forgotten and neglected by you. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant they may not.

I have now done with what I propos'd from this text. But I have another Subject to entertain you with

with for a few Minutes; and that is, a few Remarks on our dear and well-beloved Brother, Mr. John Jeffery, deceased.

His Years here were not many, being but 23 when he died. But these few Years comparatively were most of them (as I am inform'd) fill'd up with good Temper, Sobriety, and Religion, and that in the principal Parts of it, according to the Measure of Light he had receiv'd.

He had indeed the Advantage of a good and religious Education; a pious Example was set before him, and good and wholesome Instructions were given him, according to the Degree of Knowledge his Parents had: and God blessed him with Wisdom and Grace to improve them to his Glory, and his own Advantage.

He was an obedient Son to his aged Parents, and a tender and loving Brother to his Brethren and Sisters, which he maintain'd, and manifested to the Day of his Death. But his good Behaviour and Love were not confin'd at home; for they were extended to all with whom he convers'd, but especially to them who were of the Household of Faith.

He had imbib'd noble and generous Principles; and look'd upon it to be his Duty to love those who differ'd from him in Opinion, which he manifested by a free Conversation with them as he had Opportunity, and by a frequent worshipping of God with them in their Assemblies, when he could not attend his own Place, by reason of the Distance of it.

He some Years ago gave up himself to God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his People, to walk with them in all the Ordinances of God, according to his Will. And thus he did bear the Yoke of Christ in his Youth: And this must be said of him, that he was an Honour to the Profession he made of the Name of his Glorious Head.

He was also blessed with a Publick Spirit: according to his Ability, he was always ready to do good. The Interest of his glorious Lord lay near his Heart;

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and if any thing was mention'd to him that might promote it, he chearfully offer'd to put his helping-hand to it. He told me a few Weeks before his Sickness of which he died, (but not thinking then his End was so near) That God having blessed him in his Endeavours the year past, he was resolved to add to his Subscription for the support of the Ministry. And he would often enquire of me, whether a particular Affair (which would be attended with some Charge) went forward; for (said he) 'I am very desirous it should be accomplish'd; and if what I have already offer'd will not do, (which was generous for one in his Circumstances) I am ready to add more, so it may but be done.' I mention these things, to let you know how near the Interest of Christ was to him, and how ready he was in his place to advance it.

I would further add, that by Reading and good Conversation, (which were things he greatly delighted in) he had attained to a considerable Stock of good and useful Knowledge in divine Things; and he was still pressing after more, especially of the heavenly State, into which (we have no reason at all to doubt) he is now enter'd; and what he was so desirous to have known of it here, is now made known to him there.

He was serious and humble, free and pleasant in his Temper, and diligently religious in his whole Conversation. But now he is gone from us, and we are deprived of his Usefulness. But our Loss is his Gain; for *for him to live was Christ.*

Upon his Death-bed he discover'd a great Desire to acquiesce in the sovereign Pleasure of his God, and to be disposed of by him as he in his Wisdom should see fit. He also intimated he was not afraid to die, for he knew in whom he did believe. And as he was not afraid of Death, so he needed not to have been ashamed to live, (if God had seen fit to have granted him longer Life) for his Conversation had been as becomes the Gospel of his glorious Redeemer.

But I shall now say no more of him, but address myself,

(1.) To you who were the near Relations of this young Person deceased. And here I would advise you,

1. Not to mourn as those without Hope, for your Son and Brother is not dead, but sleepeth. You have good ground to believe he is now at rest in Abraham's Bosom; for the Lord hath dealt graciously with him. O! envy not him his Happiness who is now (with Christ, and would not be here again for ten thousand such Worlds as this is.

2. Consider that God is just in what he has done, and it becomes you to justify him as such, and not charge him foolishly. Death did not meet your Son and Brother without a Commission from God; so that he died according to the Word or Will of Heaven. See then that you are mute under this Rod. Be sensible of the Hand that has smitten you, but be silent under it, without murmuring, and say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, in what thou hast done.*

3. Is your Son and Brother gone? O! prepare to follow him who is gone but a little before you. Weep not for him, but for your selves, and get ready to shoot that Gulph which he has now shot; and see that you are sincere Believers in Christ, that so you may die in him: for *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them, Rev. 14. 13.*

I would now,

(2dly,) Renew my Exhortation and Advice to you young Ones, and I earnestly entreat you to hearken to it. You see the Young die as well as the Old. See then,

1. That you flatter not yourselves with the hopes of long Life. Some die in their full Strength, Job 21. 28 and so may you. *Man at his best estate walks in vain shew, and is altogether Vanity. Boast not then yourselves of to-morrow, for you know not what a Day may bring forth, Prov. 27. 1.*

2. Consider that you have Souls that must be sav'd or damn'd to all Eternity, and so great Care should be taken to provide for their Welfare in time. I beseech you to pity and compassionate the state of your Souls. Their case, by Sin, is wretched and deplorable; they are expos'd to Wrath, which calls for your Pity and Care; and remember, 'tis great Folly for a Man

your deliberate whether he shall be saved or damned, or go to Heaven or Hell when he dies. See then that you regard the Salvation of your Souls now, while you have Time and Opportunity, that you may not lament it when it is too late, and say as it is *Jer. 8. 20. The Harvest is past, and the Summer is ended, but we are not saved.* But,

3. That it may not be thus with you, let me in the third and last place, advise you to give up your selves to God now, and make it your great and main Business (as indeed it is) to serve, please, and honour him. Remember you are not your own, but God's: your Souls and Bodies are his, for he made them both. See then that you *remember God your Creator in the days of your Youth.* And because you are not your own, therefore desire and study to *glorify him with your Bodies and Spirits which are his,* 1 Cor. 6. 20. The Father, remember, is the Lord's; and he under the Law required the *First Fruits* to be offer'd up to him. What is the Evangelick Lesson of this, but that you should offer up your selves to God in the Morning of your Days, and dedicate the first of your Time and Strength to him, who has an indisputable right to them? He promises to remember the *Kindness of your Youth,* Jer. 9. 2. and he has assur'd you, that *those who seek him early shall find him,* Prov. 8. 17. Remember him who is now gone, and how early he was cut off by Death, and so may you, for you have no more an assurance of your Lives than he had. He serv'd his God and Redeemer betimes, and is now gone from hence to reign with them. Let this be your Care and Practice, that this at last may be your Happiness. O! turn not a deaf Ear to this Advice which has now been given you: and that you may not, consider what is threaten'd, *Prov. 29. 1. with which I shall conclude; He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy.*

F I N I S.

